



ROLE OF AJMODADI CHURNA IN THE MANAGEMENT OF GRIDHRASI W.S.R. TO SCIATICA – A REVIEW

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ABSTRACT

Gridhrasi as mentioned in Ayurveda explains a disorder where in pain starts from Sphik pradesha and radiates downwards to Kati, Prusta, Uru, Janu, Jangha and the patient is unable to walk properly. 'Sciatica' - a condition described in modern medicine resembles with Gridhrasi. It is a symptom or a manifestation of some other problem in which the pain starts in the back and radiates down one or both lower limbs. Herniation or degenerative changes in intervertebral disc is the most common cause. There is often a history of trauma, lifting heavy objects or exposure to cold.

The efficacy of the Ayurvedic drugs and techniques has gained global popularity in musculo-skeletal disorders like rheumatoid arthritis. Sequential administration of the Snehana, Svedana, Basti, Siraavyadha and Agnikarma are lines of treatment of Gridhrasi as expounded in the Ayurvedic literature. Apart from these procedures, the Samana line of treatment that includes oral administration of medicine is of utmost importance as the administration is very easy and also effective.

Many herbal and herbo-mineral combinations are described in Ayurveda and their therapeutic effect in Gridhrasi is yet to be explored. Ajmodadi churna is one such herbal combination mentioned in the Sharangdhara samhita, madhyama khand which is found useful in the management of Gridhrasi.

Keywords: *Gridhrasi, Sphik Pradesha, Sciatica, Ajmodadi Churna*

I. INTRODUCTION

Ayurveda, the pioneer of Indian medicine was conceived as a science and preached in our country some thousands of years ago and was considered the most advanced and scientifically proven in those days and still continues its shining. It is one such system, which prevailed 5000 years ago and has its chief objectives as – preservation of health and prevention of disease. With the progress of time, most of the dietary habits, life style and environment have been changing. All of this has caused several disharmonies in human biological system. In this fast growing highly competitive world activities like traveling, strenuous work are inevitable parts of any one's life. Living without ambulation is almost impossible for any human being, from the time immemorial to ultramodern life. Though the movements of legs are so important, these are the most neglected parts of the body and vulnerable to many diseases. The most common disorder, which affects the movement of leg particularly in most productive period of life, is low back pain, out of which 40% of persons will have radicular pain. Even with all the good food, adequate exercise, healthy precautions, people become victims of low back ache at one or the other time of their life. The main cause for

this is unhealthy food habits & lack of knowledge of maintaining their spine health, with respect to their sitting postures, walking, weight lifting and other bending activities. Spine being one of the most evolved structures in the evolution is more vulnerable for injury because of its major function of supporting the whole body. There would be no posture, no movement possible if there is no spine present in humans. Hence low back ache with the radiculopathy is one of the commonest complaints we come across in the clinical practice. Long term use of NSAIDs, Steroids will lead to peptic ulcers, Gastritis, weight gain etc. Hence alternative medicine has great advantages without any untoward effects.

A variety of Vatavyadhi described in charaka samhita are categorized into samanyaja and nanatmja group. Gridhrasi comes under 80 types of nanatmja vatavyadhi though occasionally there is kaphanubandha. Those qualities of food, mind and activity which are in concomitance with those of vata are responsible for the causation of the diseases of vata. Thus the food which is unctuous, cold, etc., the mind which is angered, feared, etc., and the activities like excessive sexual indulgence, night vigil would aggravate vata to produce vata vyadhi. The name itself indicates the way of gait shown by the patients due to extreme pain just like a gridha (vulture). It is clear that this disease not only inflicts pain but also causes difficulty in walking, which upsets the daily life of the patient.

Gridhrasi as mentioned in Ayurveda explains a disorder where in pain starts from Sphik pradesha and radiates downwards to kati, Prusta, Uru, Janu, Jangha and the patient is unable to walk properly ^[1]. 'Sciatic syndrome'-a condition described in modern medicine resembles with Gridhrasi. It is a symptom or a manifestation of some other problem in which the pain starts in the back and radiates down one or both lower limbs ^[2]. Herniation or degenerative changes in intervertebral disc is the most common cause. There is often a history of trauma, lifting heavy objects or exposure to cold.

Now the whole scientific world has high hopes on Ayurveda as it is capable to provide proper and safer methods of management in disorders where the efforts with modern medicine have failed to achieve the desired results. Already the efficacy of the Ayurvedic drugs and techniques has gained global popularity in musculo-skeletal disorders like rheumatoid arthritis. Sequential administration of the Snehana, Svedana, Basti, Siraavyadha and Agnikarma are lines of treatment of Gridhrasi as expounded in the Ayurvedic literature. ^{[3][4][5]} Apart from these procedures, the Samana line of treatment that includes oral administration of medicine is of utmost importance as the administration is very easy and also effective. But only few of research works have been carried out in relation to the Samana treatment. Many herbal and herbo-mineral combinations are described in Ayurveda and their therapeutic effect in Gridhrasi is yet to be explored. Ajmodadi churna is one such herbal combination mentioned in the Sharangdhara samhita, madhyama khand.

II. MATERIALS & METHODS

1. Gridhrasi

The word Gridhrasi is in feminine gender ^[6] which is derived from the Dhaatu "Gridhu" that means to covet, desire, and strive after greedily or eager for. In this disease the patient's gait becomes altered as his legs become tense and slightly curved due to pain resembling walk of the vulture, hence the name Gridhrasi is given.

Gridhra means vulture. Vulture is fond of meat & has a particular style of eating meat. It pierces its beak deeply in the flesh & then draws it forcefully, causing severe pain. The pain in Gridhrasi is also of the same kind, hence the name.

Gridhrasi is a Vatavyadhi characterized by Stambha (stiffness), Ruk (pain), Toda (pricking pain) and Spandana (frequent switching). These symptoms initially affect Sphik (buttock) as well as posterior aspect of Kati (waist) and then gradually radiate to posterior aspects of Ooru (thigh), Janu (knee), Jangha (calf) and Paada (foot).^[7]

1.1. Lakshanas:

- 1.1.1 Ruk:** In Gridhrasi Ruk or Soola i.e., pain is one of the prime symptoms and is felt throughout the lower limb, pain starts from Sphik region and radiates upto the Paada.^{[8][9][10]}
- 1.1.2 Toda:** Intermittent pain similar to the feeling of pin prick is known as Toda, the site of Toda is similar to the site of Soola i.e., from hips to heel.^{[11][12]}
- 1.1.3 Stambha:** Stambha refers to the stiffness or rigidity felt at the thigh and legs. As the movement of the legs worsen the pain, stiff muscles prevent this and there by manifesting as the symptom Stambha. The restriction to move the legs also affects the gait of the patient, as his steps are short, cautious and slow.^{[13][14][15]}
- 1.1.4 Sakthnaaha Kshepam Nigrahanyat:** The movement Kshepana refers to extension. Patient of Gridhrasi is unable to extend his legs as extending the legs worsens the pain. Acaarya Vaagbhat'a opines that it is the Utksepana i.e., lifting of the legs is affected in Gridhrasi.^[16]
- 1.1.5 Spandana Spuranam:** Sphurana refers to the fasciculation. Fasciculation may be present in lower extremities in patients of Gridhrasi. To be more precise this symptom is seen in the muscle supplied by the sciatic nerve.^[17]
- 1.1.6 Dehasya Vakraata:** The patient of Gridhrasi acquires a particular posture due to pain. It may be lateral and forward bending of body. The patient of Gridhrasi keeps the leg in flexed position and tries to walk without much extension in the affected side. Hence the whole body is tilted on the affected side and he assumes the bending posture or limping. This gait is also typical in Gridhrasi.^[18]
- 1.1.7 Stabdata Brisam:** A severe degree of stiffness^[19]
- 1.1.8 Mukha Praseka:** Mukhapraseka means excessive salivation in mouth^[20]
- 1.1.9 Arocaka:** It is a subjective symptom where patient fails to appreciate the taste in the mouth irrespective of state of appetite.^[21]
- 1.1.10 Gaurava:** Patient feels heaviness particularly in the lower limb or limbs.^[22]
- 1.1.11 Staimityam:** Inertness of the body, feeling of freezing sensation in the affected lower limb.^[23]
- 1.1.12** Few of the symptoms of Gridhrasi are Sopha, Kara Paada Vidaaha Krit, Sveda, Moorcha, Bhrama and Trishna..^[24]

2. Drug Review

2.1 Contents of Ajmodadi Churna .

| Contents | | | |
|------------------|-----------|--------------|---------|
| Ajmoda | 1 part | Chitraka | 1 part |
| Vidanga | 1 part | Pippali Mula | 1 part |
| Saindhava Lavana | 1 part | Satahva | 1 part |
| Pippali | 1 part | Maricha | 1 part |
| Devadaru | 1 part | Haritaki | 5 part |
| Vrudhadaru | 1/10 part | Sunthi | 10 part |

1.2 Dose: 4 grams three times in a day with lukewarm water.

III. DISCUSSION

• Discussion on Gridhrasi and Sciatica

All the Ayurvedic classics have described the disease Gridhrasi in detail. Acharya Charaka has thrown light on the role of Vaata Dosha in health and disease which is described in the first chapter itself. In 20th chapter Mahaarogadhyaaya, of Sootrasthaana, 80 types of Vaataja Naanaatmaja Vikaaras are mentioned; Where Gridhrasi is also mentioned along with other diseased conditions involving the legs like Paada soola, Paada bhramsa, Paadasuptataa, Vaatakhuddataa, Oorusaada etc. Description about this disease is present even from the time of vedic period in the form of vatavyadhi.

• Discussion on mode of action of Churna

The materials in the nature including the human body as well as drugs are composed of panchamahabutha. In drug compositions of these mahabuthas are known by inferred on the basis of their properties like Rasa, Guna, Viryaa, Vipaka, Prabhava etc, which are inherent in drug on which the pharmacodynamic depends. In Ajmodadi Churna, the contents are Ajmoda, Vidanga, Sunthi etc., all having properties of Deepana, Pachana, Ushna, Tikshna guna and Vatanulomana. Sushrutacharya mentioned most of the ingredients of Ajmodadi churna in Pipalyadi gana, which acts as a Deepana, Vata-kaphahara, Aruchi, Gulma and shoola ghataka. Ajmoda has got properties of Vatanulomana and acts in a short time. It is backed up with Tikshna, Ushna gunadi Chitraka, Pippali, Maricha etc. Hence it becomes Sukshma Srotogamini. Due to which vitiated Kapha dosha get dissolve, after dissolvment of Kapha dosha Vatanulomana is the next work done by Ajmoda and Haritaki. In this way, Ajmodadi Churna works in Ama pachana and after it Agnivardhaka Vatanulomana as Vayu gets normal gati that is Pratiloma gati and shoolaprashamana occurs. In Gridhrasi, Ama due to Agnimandya is formed which creates obstruction and due to obstruction Ruka is produced which is a cardinal symptom of Gridhrasi.

IV. CONCLUSION

After going through literary aspect and based on the clinical trial following conclusions can be drawn:

Gridhrasi is shoola pradhana vataja nanatmaja vyadhi Gridhrasi can be compared with sciatica based on its etiopathogenesis and symptomatology. The pratyatma lakshana Ruk, Toda, Sthamba, Spandana were the common presentation in almost all the patients. Occupation and mainly improper posture plays an important role in the manifestation of this disease. Ajmodadi churna is quite effective in management of Gridhrasi. Ajmodadi Churna is cost-effective, safe, and easy to take which can be done by the patient himself/herself in their own homes. There is no drug having untoward effect, here this modality of treatment is unique in the management of Gridhrasi and can safely be used in lieu of modern medicine.

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